

REMARKS

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1-17 will be all the claims pending in the application. Claims 9 and 12 have been amended to correct an inadvertent typographical error and to provide antecedent basis for a claim term.

Applicants respectfully submit that with the entry of the proposed amendments, the present application will be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of the above amendments is respectfully requested.

In addition, new claims 14-17 depending from claim 9 and corresponding to original claims 3-6, have been added. Since it is submitted that claims 9-12 are allowable, claims 14-17 which depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 9 are allowable for the same reasons.

Also, it is noted that the Examiner has indicated that none of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received. However, the Examiner acknowledged Applicants' claim to priority under 35 U.S.C. §119, and has confirmed receipt of the priority document in the Office Action dated August 27, 2003. Accordingly, clarification of this point is respectfully requested.

Further, the Examiner has indicated that although a PTO Form-1449 for the IDS received on October 28, 2002 was not found, all the references have been considered. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to return an initialed and signed copy of the PTO Form-1449 filed with the October 28, 2002 Information Disclosure Statement, which is re-submitted herewith.

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 9-12 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out

and distinctly claim the subject matter that Applicants regard as the invention.

Specifically, the Examiner asserts that in claim 9, line 2, "metal metal" is not understood and that in claim 12, "said microparticles" lacks definite antecedent basis.

Applicants have amended claim 9 to simply delete the second recitation of "metal," and amended claim 12 by replacing "microparticles have" with --microparticle has--. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the amendments overcome the 112 rejection and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested, and allowance of claims 9-17 at an early date is respectfully requested.

If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



Keiko K. Takagi
Registration No. 47,121

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

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